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BESSEMER CITY RECREATION ANALYSIS

BESSEMER CITY, N. C.

1977 - 2000



CITY OF BESSEMER CITY, NORTH CAROLINA

BRUCE

George Beck

## BESSEMER CITY RECREATION ANALYSIS

BESSEMER CITY, N. C.

John Harris

David Beck

Jim Nelson

1977 - 2000

J. A. Henry

Marjorie McCallum

Fred Wray

### PLANNING & MONITORING COMMITTEE

Alfred Beck, Jr.

Richard Wells

Edrick Beck, Chairman

Bob McCallum

Reggie McCallum

Jack Wray

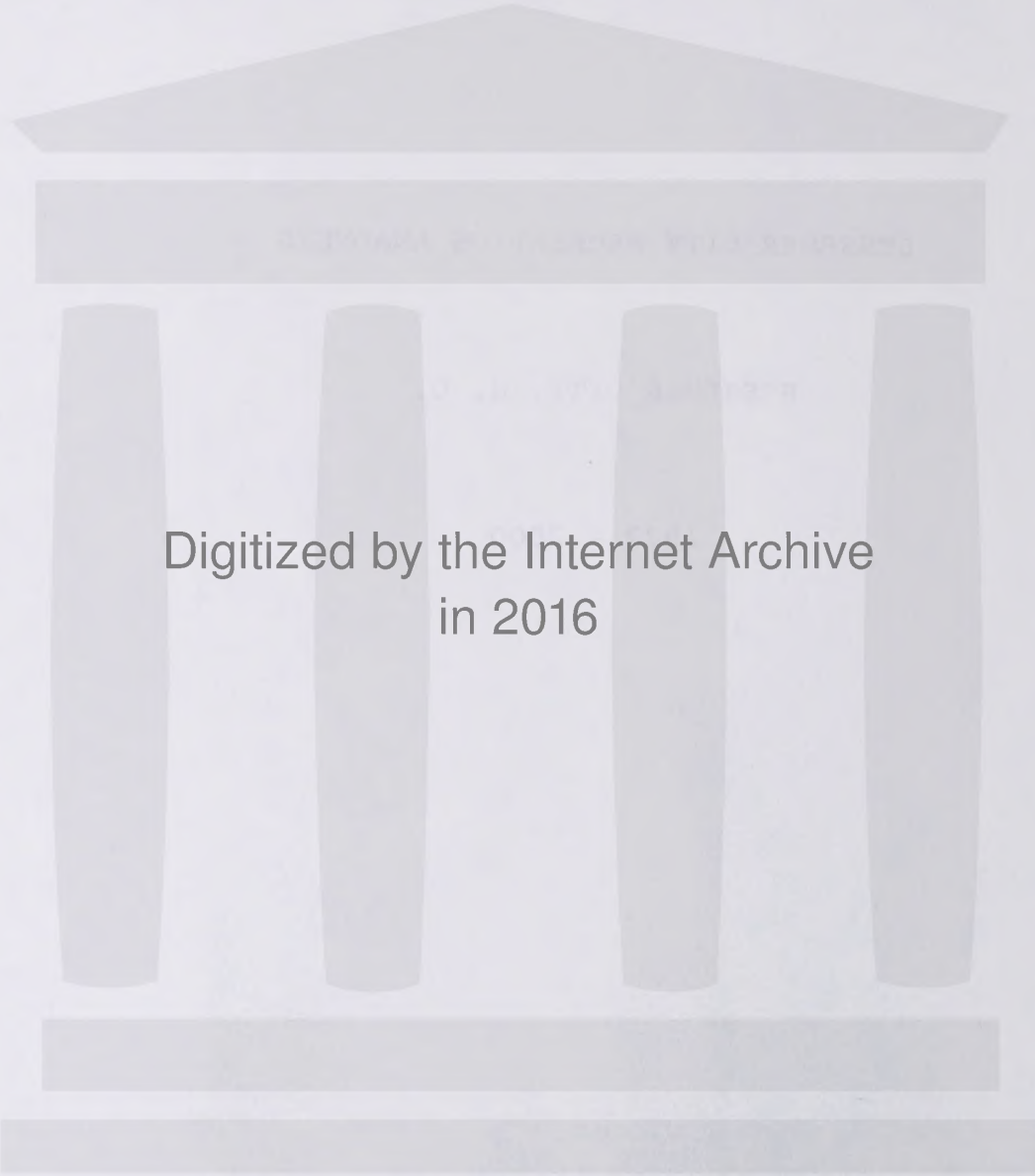
Charles Wells

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William L. McCallum

William L. McCallum





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RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Donnie Kincaid, Recreation Director

Chris Lingerfelt, Recreation Supervisor

PLANNING STAFF

Michael R. Brunnemer	Anita P. Davis
George Lutz	





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## INTRODUCTION

The 2000 population of the City of Bessemer City will be not only larger but more diverse in character. The average person will earn more, will be better educated, will have more leisure time, and a longer productive life. One result of these changes will be a greater demand for recreational facilities and services.

Another result of change in the Bessemer City area is evident in its pattern of growth. As development accelerates, the need to preserve open space becomes increasingly important. These spaces will be needed to provide visual relief, to buffer neighborhoods, and to shield communities from the outward growth of surrounding cities.

Primary responsibility for preserving open space and providing recreation facilities must be assumed by the local government working in cooperation with state, regional, and county groups. Affirmative action is needed before opportunities are lost to development and land costs become completely prohibitive.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report includes three functional areas. The first, to inventory and analyze the present use of designated recreational land in the City of Bessemer City. Secondly, this report will make realistic estimations of future recreation needs, and make specific recommendations for development according to needs and priorities. Third, the plan will be designed to act as a tool to evaluate proposed new





development before recommendations are made to the City Commissioners.

## SCOPE

The scope of this study will be limited to the recreational facilities in the planning area. The BESSEMER CITY RECREATION ANALYSIS will have no legal status except to make recommendations. Its recommendations are advisory, not mandatory.

The planning period covered by this report is from 1977 to 2000. However, no planning study can anticipate all the changes in technology and society that will occur during a twenty-three year period. The plan must be reviewed and updated periodically. It should be flexible, but not so flexible that it is rendered ineffective by being changed for personal whims. To be effective, it must be accepted by the people of Bessemer City; only then can it be utilized as a framework for the making of decisions by public officials concerning future recreational development.

## METHODOLOGY

To accomplish the purposes of this study, a detailed analysis of the existing recreational facilities will be made. Standards, policies and goals must be defined to accurately evaluate present facilities. Existing facilities will be inventoried and deficiencies pointed out.

Once the existing analysis has been completed, it is then necessary for the City Commissioners, Recreation Committee, and staff to compile a priority list designed to alleviate these problems.

Available methods for implementation will be included.





## BACKGROUND

### A. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE AS A PUBLIC FUNCTION

Essential to a community are its recreation facilities. Serving the community's physical and psychological needs, recreation provides an inherently vital use of leisure time. If sufficiently broad and flexible, a recreational program meets the needs of virtually everyone in the community; the frolicking of the preschool child, the group-games of the adolescent, the purposeful activities of the adult, and the social expressions of those of vintage age.

As expected in any locality that experiences growth, the present recreational facilities in Bessemer City will be vastly inadequate for the population projections of 2000. In planning for the immediate and future demands for recreation in Bessemer City, two elements are of key significance: (1) adjustments to accommodate imminent needs must be made within a relatively short time, and (2) the general upgrading of all necessary public services indicates that all recreational proposals must be related to realistic programs for financing and must be undertaken on a priority basis in accordance with an overall plan.

Presently, the City of Bessemer City has designated approximately 53.46 acres of land for recreational use, but only 17.89 acres are developed. If Bessemer City were to adopt as a guide to planning for present and future needs, the park acreage standards recommended by the National Recreation Association an additional 29 acres of land would be needed by 2000 to provide the the recommended minimum of 10 acres of dedicated and usable park land for each 1,000 residents.





Of course, land alone does not suffice. The geographical distribution of the land determines how the land can be used and who will have access to it. At present, the City of Bessemer City is faced with the problem of designated park lands which are unsuitable for development.

The community has to identify what type of recreational facilities and programs the citizenry needs or demands in order to provide an adequate program. Thus, the responsibility lies upon the public sector, the municipality or other public body, to survey or otherwise determine by local means what the public needs and what the public can afford. Objectives and projects must be developed to accomplish these specified goals and secure to the public, good recreational opportunity at least cost possible.

## B. TRENDS IN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES NATIONWIDE

### 1. General Trends

One of the chief products of the age of technology has been increased leisure. Since the early forties, the forty-hour work week has been a reality, and sociologists today are predicting a four-day work week by 1980. We now have more discretionary time--time left over after the business of living is attended to--than ever before in the history of mankind. This time comes in segments, some small, some large; and the recreation experience may take a few hours, a few days, or a few weeks.

We choose to use this time in a variety of ways, and the implications for recreation are explosive. Much of the demand for recreation is for indoor facilities and active opportunities. Recent studies conducted by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, however, indicate that Americans are turning to the out-of-doors for recreation in unprecedented numbers. While it is estimated that the population of this country will





increase by 30% by the year 2000,<sup>1/</sup> the demand for recreation opportunities may increase as much as 100% in the same time.

In addition to the increase in population and in leisure, two major factors are identified as contributing to this growth in recreation demand.

One major factor is mobility. Americans today are more mobile than ever before in history. To some extent, they can go where they want to go, when they want to go. But recent fuel shortages and high costs encourage the public to want recreation opportunities near at hand and readily available. Thus, the distance people are willing or able to travel for certain recreation experiences becomes a major factor in planning.

Also, because of our continued economic growth and relative prosperity and despite inflation, more Americans today can afford to pay for certain recreation experiences and are willing to do so.

As the number of people and their leisure time continue to grow, land and water for recreation becomes increasingly difficult to find. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) in a 1970 sample survey,<sup>1/</sup> found that of all persons 12 years old and over, 48% participate in picnicking, 44% in swimming, 33% in playing outdoor games and sports. The BOR study also reports on the number of visits per year to each facility by the average participant. For example, those who played outdoor games and sports did so, on an average, 37 times, while the picnicker averaged only 6 picnic. It is apparent from these illustrations, that planning for recreation and open space in Bessemer City, must include sports facilities, trails, and use of water based facilities.

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<sup>1/</sup> Bureau of the Census, Series E Projection, 1974.

<sup>2/</sup> U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, The 1970 Survey of Outdoor Recreation Activities, A Preliminary Report, February, 1972.





## 2. Other Specific Trends

From time to time, specific recreation activities become extremely popular, both at the national and local level. Recent examples are, tennis, bicycling, and hiking.

Tennis is currently enjoying explosive growth. Locally this trend has been encouraged by the City Recreation Department, and the demand for additional tennis courts may continue to outstrip the supply.

The City program should be alert to such emerging interests, and to the extent possible, should seek to provide for them.



## CONCEPT OF SERVICE FOR THE CITY OF BESSEMER CITY

In Bessemer City, there exists a need for two distinctly different types of recreation areas. First, there is a need to preserve open spaces and to provide large areas for relatively passive forms of recreation, which represents the kinds of recreation that most people prefer. The planners recommend that these needs be met through a system of resource oriented, or special purpose parks.

Natural woodland and lakes, for example, create the beauty or unique character of such areas. Generally, they are special-purpose parks in which activities are self-motivated and require no direct activity leadership. Once they are developed, the management role is primarily custodial, and in some cases interpretive. But resource oriented parks may also be multi-purpose, given enough land, they may include swimming facilities, picnic areas, children's equipment, quiet sitting areas, trails, and so forth.

The second major need is for active recreation places. This need can be met through the Community Park. These areas should provide recreation opportunities for each member of the family, including a play lot for small children, a ballfield with a 60-foot diamond for softball and junior baseball, an open field for various games and sports, an apparatus area for older children, and a multi-purpose slab for basketball, volleyball, and similar court games. It may also include areas for quiet activity and such adult games as shuffleboard, horseshoes, and croquet. Picnic tables and places for quiet activity such as chess, checkers and card games are also appropriate. Supervised play activity should be offered during the summer months.





## GOALS, POLICIES AND STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

### AND RECREATION IN THE CITY OF BESSEMER CITY

Recognizing the importance of basing a recreation program on goals, and policies, the following have been compiled:

1. Goals for Citywide Recreation
2. Policies for Citywide Recreation
3. Standards for Citywide Parks
4. Standards for Special Facilities

The following sections of this study, after quantifying land and facility needs, identify existing resources to partially meet those needs and recommend land acquisition and facility development to remove the deficits.





## GOALS FOR CITYWIDE RECREATION

### A. Open Space

Provide land and water areas adequate in size and strategic in location for leisure pursuits, and visual enhancement and conservation, for present and future generations.

### B. Programs and Facilities

Provide diverse facilities and programs to meet the basic recreational interests of children, teenagers and adults, recognizing the special needs of the elderly, the deprived and the handicapped. Such facilities and programs shall be conveniently located and equitably distributed.

### C. Optimum Utilization

Utilize the city's natural features along with its man-made and human resources to develop a variety of unique, specialized and innovative leisure opportunities which are educational, recreational, and self-fulfilling.

### D. Cooperative Efforts, and Consolidation of Services

Offer programs, services, and facilities which complement and supplement those provided by other public and private agencies.



## POLICIES FOR CITYWIDE RECREATION

- . Adopt the attached recommended standards and criteria for
  1. publicly-owned acreage for recreation and open space
  2. convenient and equitable site location
  3. facilities for recreational programs, and
  4. defining governmental levels of responsibility for provision of open space/recreational opportunities and avoiding duplication of facilities and programs indifferent jurisdictions
3. Sustain local government funding sufficient to
  1. match other sources of funds as the opportunity arises, in conformity with adopted priorities, and
  2. pursue a program of land acquisition, facilities construction and program administration in the absence of outside funding
- C. Provide financial support for leisure opportunities available through the historical, cultural, and educational resources of the community
- D. Develop mechanisms for public response to recreation planning
- E. Identify and draw into recreation programs, local individuals and groups with capabilities for devising and leading unique leisure experiences
  1. to meet special needs
  2. to stimulate broad-ranging interests, and
  3. to provide adventurous experiences
- F. Cooperate with the Library Board and other public agencies to expand cultural resources and programs, and to extend their availability
- G. Cooperate with non-public groups in the provision of open space/leisure opportunities
- H. Make temporary recreational use of existing publicly-owned land acquired for other purposes
- I. Identify, conserve, and enhance natural resources with unique





recreational value

- J. Experiment with ways to make temporary public recreational use of privately owned land which is strategically located and has suitable characteristics
- K. Experiment with ways, other than full purchase, to bring open space into public ownership or control
- L. Provide incentives and controls to encourage owners of private property to preserve open space as a visual amenity
- M. Expand and strengthen the Planning Board and intergovernmental review process for capital improvement projects





TABLE 1

## CHARACTERISTICS AND STANDARDS FOR RECREATION AREAS IN BESSEMER CITY

<u>Type</u>	<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Facilities</u>	<u>Size of Area</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Travel Distance</u>
Playlot	pre-school	sand boxes, swings, slides, blocks, teeters, climbing apparatus, landscaped borders	average 5,000 10,000 sq. feet	near center bloc	1 - 2 blocks
Neighborhood Playground	all ages but primarily school children 5 - 15 years	apparatus area for younger children, courts for tennis and basketball, swimming pool, ballfields	1 acre per 800 people-minimum of 4 acres	near center neighborhood within easy, safe, walking distance	1/2 mile
Neighborhood Park	all ages	benches, walkways, landscaping	1 acre per 800 people-minimum of 4 acres	near center of neighborhood within easy, safe walking distance	1/2 mile
Community Playfield	youth and adults	area for active sports such as baseball, softball, football, track, preferably with stands	minimum of 12 acres	convenient to entire community	
Community Park	youth and adults including family groups	areas for active sports such as baseball, football, softball, track, courts for tennis, baseball	minimum of 20 acres	convenient to entire community	



TABLE 1. CONT.

CHARACTERISTICS AND STANDARDS FOR RECREATION AREAS IN BESSEMER CITY

<u>Type</u>	<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Facilities</u>	<u>Size of Area</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Travel Distance</u>
Special Facilities	all ages	varies	varies	convenient to entire community	

Source: Adapted by Bessemer City Planning Department from the National Recreation and Park Association.





TABLE 2

## STANDARDS FOR SPECIAL FACILITIES

The following standards are recommended for individual recreation facilities.

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Standard/ 1000 People</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Baseball Diamonds	1 per 6,000	Regulation 90'
Softball Diamonds (and/or youth diamonds)	1 per 3,000	
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000	(Best in Battery of 4)
Basketball Courts	1 per 5000	
Swimming pools	1 per 12,400 - 20,000	Depending on population density
Skating Rinks (artificial)	1 per 30,000	1 game room
Neighborhood Center Buildings	1 per 10,000	
Community Center Buildings	1 per 25,000	
Volleyball Courts	1 per 2,000	
Shuffleboard	1 per 3,000	

Source: Adapted by Bessemer City Planning Department from the National Recreation and Park Association.





## APPLICATION OF STANDARDS TO DETERMINE NEEDS

In determining needs, the standards compiled by the National Recreation and Park Association are the basis. At the same time, these standards must not dictate recreational development for the City of Bessemer City.

Trends in recreational needs are constantly fluctuating and considerations must be given to these instances. Therefore, facilities and recommendations may vary somewhat.

### A. Population Projections

The population of the City of Bessemer City, was reported as 5,217 in the 1970 census. It is projected to increase to 6,445 by 1980, 7,466 by 1990, and 8,266 by 2000. These projections are related to the geographic area of the City of Bessemer City as it existed in 1970, and annexations could alter this figure. The 2000 projections in Table 3 are the basis for estimating land and facility needs in the following sections of this study.

TABLE 3. Existing and Projected Population City of Bessemer City  
1970 - 2000

	1970	1980	1990	2000
City of Bessemer City	5,217	6,445	7,466	8,266

Source: Bessemer City Land Use Analysis, Land Development Plan, Community Facilities Plan, prepared for City of Bessemer City by the Gaston Regional Planning Commission.



# LAND NEEDED TO SERVE THE PROJECTED POPULATION

Using estimated population projections, and based on National Recreation and Park Association Standards---ten acres of park or playground land for every 1000 persons in the population, by 2000 twenty-nine acres will be needed as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4.  
1970 - 2000  
CITY OF BESSEMER CITY

	1970	2000
Estimated Population	5,217	8,266
Acreage Required to Serve Pop. 10 ac/1000	52	82
Acreage Existing 1970	53	53
Minimum Additional Acreage Needed	0	29

Source: Table 6





## FACILITIES NEEDED TO SERVE THE PROJECTED POPULATION

Selected facilities needed to serve the City of Bessemer City are listed in the last column of Table 5. These figures are based on National Recreation Standards. The planners recommend that these figures serve as an aid in recreational planning, but that final considerations rest with community need and appeal.

Table 5. Selected Facility Needs, 2000

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Gross Needs</u>
Netball Goals per 500 pop.	8,266	16
Tennis Courts per 2,000 pop.		4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Softball/Youth Baseball Diamonds per 3,000 pop.		2
Baseball Diamonds per 6,000 pop.		1
Neighborhood Center Buildings per 10,000		1
Swimming Pool per 20,000		1
Volleyball Courts per 2,000		4
Billiard Board per 3,000		2

Source: Table 2 - 3

1/ Due to the increasing popularity of tennis, additional tennis courts will be needed.





## DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING FACILITIES

The purpose of this section is to identify and analyze existing recreational facilities in the City of Bessemer City. Before future recreational goals can be established, present facilities must be inventoried. Each facility should reflect innovative planning and ecological conservation.

1. Bessemer City Park, located west of 14th Street and south of N. C. 161, is comprised of 14.98 acres, of which 4 acres are developed. At present, Bessemer City Park and the community building located there, are used extensively for activities sponsored by the Recreation Department, and serve as focal points for the community.

The Community Center is equipped with a game room, restrooms, assembly room, office space and kitchen facilities. It serves as a meeting place for numerous civic and governmental organizations.

Other facilities include 2 paved and lighted tennis courts, with an additional 2 tennis courts under construction at the time of this study. Playground facilities include swings, monkey bars, and a see-saw.

An olympic-size swimming pool offers a variety of swimming programs for the community.

2. Washington Park, located north of Washington Avenue and west of Park Street is comprised of 13.89 acres. This facility is



equipped with a football field, lighted baseball field, and a lighted little league field. Also, Washington Park is used by the American Legion teams during their baseball seasons. This park is primarily used for softball and baseball activities.

3. Indian Springs Park, located on Skyland Drive is comprised of 7.46 acres. Presently, this site is not used extensively and the facilities are limited. They include a recreation building and basketball courts, both which are extremely delapidated.
4. Skyland Park, located south of Sunset Avenue and east of Pinchback Avenue is comprised of 17.13 acres. An archery range developed by the Bessemer City Archery Club is the primary use of this park.
5. Bessemer City Public Library, located on North 12th Street was constructed in 1959. It is comprised of 1083 square feet and contains shelf space for approximately 12,000 book. The Bessemer City Public Library assists the Recreation Department in numerous programs. These include children's reading programs, eight week summer programs, and Senior Citizens's activities. Approximately 50% of its use is for pleasure and leisure.





## LAND AVAILABLE

To enable officials to determine future land needs, Table 6 illustrates the existing land resources available to meet recreational needs.

Table 6. Land Available to Meet Bessemer City Park Needs

Sites	Acres
Bessemer City Park	14.98
Washington Park	13.89
Indian Springs Park	7.46
Skyland Park	17.13
(4)	53.46

Source: Bessemer City Planning Department





## FACILITIES INVENTORY

Facilities available at park sites throughout the city are presented in Table 7. This table will enable the City Commissioners, Recreation Committee, Planning Board and staff to efficiently plan facilities for future recreational needs.



# RECREATIONAL FACILITIES INVENTORY, CITY OF BESSEMER CITY

	Basketball	Tennis Courts	Softball/Youth Bspl.	Baseball Diamonds	Football Fields	Multi-purpose Bflds.	Slides	Swing Sets	Gymnasia	Swimming Pool	Community Center	Other
Bessemer City Park		4					1	1	1	1	1	picnic tables, monkey bar, see-saw
Washington Park			2	1	1							
Indian Springs Park	2										1	
Skyland Park												Archery Range Developed by B. C. Archery Club
Total	2	4	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	

Source: Bessemer City Planning Department





## LAND PROPOSED FOR ACQUISITION

Table 8 shows that by 2,000 29 additional acres of open space and park land will be needed using National Recreation Association guidelines. At present, there is no deficit in land designated for recreational facilities. Sites have been compiled by the Recreation Committee, and will continue to be studied until such time as they become needed.

Table 8 Additional Citywide Open Space Needed to Meet 2000 Projections

City Parks	2000 Population	Gross Needs	1970 Supply	2000 Deficit
	8,266	82	53	29

---

The Committee should be aware of methods by which these lands may be acquired. These include:

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| (a) Direct Purchase         | Willing Seller/Willing Buyer  |
| (b) Condemnation            | Court (legal proceedings)   |
| (c) Tax Forclosures         | Usually through nonpayment of taxes or assessments                                      |
| (d) Subdivision regulations | Requirement in some cities and/or state   |
| (e) Joint Use               | Usually with a Board of Education   |
| (f) Reclamation             | Land previously used for other purposes i.e., sanitary landfills, sewage disposal sites |
| (g) Gifts/Donations         | Individuals, corporations, etc.   |





(h) Lease or loan

Borrowing or renting the use of property

(i) Bequest

Through wills

These methods will be discussed in more detailed in the section of this report dealing with implementation.

Table 7. Additional Selected Facilities Needed to Meet 2000 Projections

Facility	1970 Need	1970 Supply	2000 Supply
Highschool Grade	28	2	14
Junior High	8	2	11
Highschool/Adult Education Programs	1	2	8
Elementary Schools	1	1	8
Highschool	1	1	8
Community Facilities	1	1	8
Swimming Pool	1	1	8
Volleyball Courts	1	1	8
Shuffleboard	1	1	8

Source: Table 2 - 7

If due to the increasing popularity of tennis, this figure may vary from community to community.



## Facilities Proposed

The number and kinds of facilities recommended will vary based on the number of people served and local need. Table 9 shows selected facility deficits. These figures do not reflect actual needs, which often vary with community interest and desires. These figures can serve as an aid to establishing priorities, and facility development.

Table 9. Additional Selected Facilities Needed to Meet 2000 Projections

<u>Facility</u>	<u>2000 Gross Need</u>	<u>1970 Supply</u>	<u>2000 Deficit</u>
Basketball Goals	16	2	14
Tennis Courts	4	2	2 <u>1/</u>
Softball/Youth Baseball Diamonds	2	2	0
Baseball Diamonds	1	1	0
Neighborhood Community Buildings	1	1	0
Swimming Pool	1	1	0
Volleyball Courts	4	0	4
Shuffleboard	2	0	2

Source: Table 5 - 7

1/ Due to the increasing popularity of tennis, this figure may vary from community to community.





## PROPOSED SITE DEVELOPMENT

To serve all of the citizens of the City of Bessemer City - an estimated 8,266 by 2000 - additional recreation facilities will be needed. These facilities should offer varied recreational experiences to every facet of the community. In light of this goal, the following proposals are offered:

### 1. Bessemer City Park

1. To develop picnic grounds, containing picnic tables, shelters, grills, water fountains and bathroom facilities
2. To develop nature and physical fitness trails for hiking
3. To build a storage building for equipment
4. Light new tennis courts presently being built

### 2. Washington Park

1. Rennovate Washington Park softball field
2. Landscape field and banks to eliminate drainage problems
3. Relight existing softball field
4. Develop a new lighted baseball field
5. To develop comfort stations

### 3. Skyland Park

1. As much as possible, this site should remain in its natural state. The planners recommend that the beauty of these wooded areas be preserved. One of the finest archery ranges in the two Carolinas has been developed here by the





Bessemer City Archery Club

2. Picnic area and nature trails could be developed on this site without hampering the natural beauty of this site

4. Indian Springs Park

1. To improve facilities in community building
2. To develop a playground with slides, see-saws, and swings
3. To repair basketball courts and nets
4. To acquire a supervisor for summer recreation

These proposals are recommendations, nothing more. It will be the responsibility of the City Commissioners, Recreation Committee, Planning Board and staff to determine the direction of recreational activities for the City of Bessemer City. Community needs and recreational trends must be considered in the decision-making process.



## PRIORITIES

Sufficient capital is necessary to implement the improvements program below. These improvements should be largely attainable by 2000.

The thrust of this program is threefold:

- to acquire strategic land areas for open space
- to develop certain of these lands in order to make them accessible to the public
- to provide sufficient facilities to permit the operation of an adequate recreation program for the City of Bessemer City

Final costs cannot be determined until detailed designs are developed.

These designs can be prepared as soon as development priorities are established.

The City Commissioners, together with the Planning Board, Recreation Committee and staff, should continue to work diligently to establish priorities in the 1977 - 78 fiscal year.





## ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

Administratively, the City Recreation Department should be responsible to the people through the City Manager and Commissioners, and should be concerned with two basic functions: the provision of land and facilities and the supervision of a variety of programs.

These personnel should include the following:

Recreation Director - The Recreation Director should have the basic responsibility of carrying out the policies and programs approved by the Commissioners.

These responsibilities may specifically include:

- hiring and training of staff
- devising and managing operating budgets
- promoting the use of the system by the public
- establishing criteria for programs
- initiating new projects
- manage the Bessemer City Community Centers

Recreation Supervisor - The Recreation Supervisor should be responsible for assisting the Director in implementing and coordinating programs.

The Recreation Supervisor may also serve in the following capacities:

- instructor of recreational classes
- receptionist





- coordinator for special events

- coordinator for recreation travel

Maintenance -

It is recommended that the City Recreation

Department include maintenance of active recreation areas in its proposal for program services.

These employees, under the supervision of the director, should maintain and repair recreational facilities and grounds.



## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### SITE PLANNING

To plan adequate recreational facilities, specific site plans for parks must be developed. Planning specific sites is a joint responsibility of the Planning Department and the appropriate operating departments.

In site planning, consideration should be given to the following:

- A. Location - thoroughfares, industrial areas, other hazards
- B. Property lines
- C. Terrain - Slope (general and unusual)
- D. Soils - type
- E. Vegetation amount, type, location
- F. Size - mini-park, neighborhood park, community park
- G. Attendance area
- H. Age classification to be served
- I. Desirable facilities for "that" type park
- J. Park "zoning", grouping compatible development
- K. Priority list for development
- L. Cost of each work element
- M. Provisions for maintenance
- N. Provisions for operation
- O. Provisions for control of area - supervision and management
- P. Water/Sewer electric and gas connections





- Q. Parking - dependent upon type of area and locations
- R. Design of structure
- S. Landscaping/fencing/signs/lighting





## INCENTIVES FOR USE OF PRIVATE LAND

The use of private lands for public purposes offers a means of reducing public costs.

Devices which should be explored include:

- tax relief for selected private lands made available for public use
- the acquisition of scenic easements
- the acquisition of right - of - ways
- tax relief for the restoration and preservation of privately owned buildings and land of architectural or historic significance



## IMPLEMENTATION

The City Commissioners, Planning Board, Recreation Committee, and staff, should be aware of methods that may be used to implement open space and recreation proposals. These methods vary from the purchase of land to the use of governmental taxing and police powers. This section of the report identifies the major tools that can be use to implement proposals. These methods include:

Fee Acquisition

Tax Delinquent Land Acquisition

Condemnation

Transfers

Donation

Zoning

Subdivision Regulations

Restriction of Municipal Services

Federal Programs

### Fee Acquisition

Outright purchase is used most frequently by governments, although it is the most expensive method of acquiring land. Several advantages can be cited for outright purchase. First, the public can purchase a portion of a tract of land proposed for development to be used for open space as development of the remainder of the tract occurs. In such a situation, land prices are usually lower. Secondly, the public can acquire land for open space and recreation purposes, then sell the land to a developer with restrictions on the land's use. The developer makes improvements and leases the land back





to the public, which assures development of the land and limits the initial cost. Third, the public can acquire land and lease it to a private developer with the stipulation that the public be permitted to use the facility.

### Tax Delinquent Land Acquisition

Acquiring land through tax delinquencies is another effective method of obtaining land for open space and recreational facilities. Most communities have significant amounts of tax delinquent land which is well located for certain uses. Tax delinquencies occur annually and rural or semi-rural areas prior to becoming urban developed usually have a high incidence of tax delinquent land. In implementing an open space and recreation plan, it would be advisable to locate tax delinquent lands and determine if they can be acquired and related to the over-all plan. However, there are legal difficulties to establishing title which must be understood and known.

### Condemnation

Use of eminent domain to acquire land for public use is often a good tool for implementing proposals. However, it is not extremely useful for obtaining large masses of land because of the cost. Eminent domain is useful to acquire easements for various open spaces purposes. Such easements may give the public the right to use the land for certain purposes, such as riding, fishing, or hiking, or they may not give the public the right to use the land, but only restrict the owner's use of the land. Generally, easements have been used when full ownership has not been necessary or has been too costly.





## Transfers

This method actually involves a donation of land from one governmental agency to another, from a school board to a city, or some other similar situation. Also, it may be possible to integrate the use of other governmental and into an open space plan. Such land should be inventoried to determine its usefulness to the community's need for open space land.

## Donation

There are many civic minded persons that donate land to the public. However, a problem occurs when the size, location, or need of the gift is not in the public interests. Donations of land should be accepted if they conform to the plan for open space and recreation. Where this does not occur, they land should be accepted if it can be exchanged for other areas which would conform to the overall plan. This method is most effective when a plan for donation has been prearranged to coordinate with a donor plan for giving which is invariably tied to his Federal Income Tax situation. Most donors already give to various institutions and charities to the limit of their tax effectiveness of donations; to be effective the agency seeking recreational land must seek a place on the donors schedule.

In selecting a donor, examine his land holding and income for tax purposes first -- then determine if the giving of land will benefit him in other ways, i.e., enhance the value of other land he owns; provide recreation for his employees; improve his personal or public image, etc.

## Zoning

Zoning proves to be a useful tool for implementing plan proposals. Although existing zoning ordinances do not have specific provisions for preserving open





space, other aspects of zoning are useful, such as flood plain zoning, agricultural zoning, historical zoning, cluster zoning, and planned unit development.

Flood plain, agricultural and historical zoning are a variation of the usual establishment of districts, where certain uses are permitted and restrictions are imposed. In flood plain zoning, an area is zoned to keep development out of the floodable area and uses permitted in the district are limited to recreation, parking or agriculture. Cluster zoning allows a builder to concentrate development on a certain section of tract of land, leaving the remainder to be used for open space.

Establishing a planned unit development district offers potential for implementing proposals of the open space plan. This concept requires the developer to prepare a plan showing how he proposed to arrange buildings, facilities, and open spaces in a residential, commercial or institutional development project. The Planning Board may vary the usual zoning requirements that apply to lot coverage and density, but will reach an agreement with the developer on how open space is to be used and where it is to be located. This agreement then becomes a pact binding on the developer and requires him to follow the approved plan. Planned unit developments make it possible to link together open spaces and provide recreation facilities at strategic locations.

#### Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision regulations can play an important role in providing open space. Some communities require that developers dedicate a certain percentage of land, usually two to five percent, for parks and open space. The amount of land dedicated is based on a proportion of open space land relative to the numbers of lots developed. In some communities where this policy was practiced,





it was found that not all subdivisions had desirable land for park sites or else the location did not conform to the over-all plan. Where this occurred, some communities required cash payments in lieu of a park area.

#### Restriction of Municipal Services

The City can accomplish much in preserving open space by establishing policies related to the provision of public facilities and services. Some open land could be held open by the City's decision to withhold such facilities as roads and water mains to the area. Coordinating improvements in desirable development areas should be considered in the City's scheduling of public improvements.





Federal Programs

Federal programs can be valuable aids in the implementation of open space programs. Among the most effective Federal programs are the Open Space Land and Urban Beautification Grants, which are available through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Open Space Land and Urban Beautification Grants are available to governments to assist in the acquisition and development of land for open space use. Fifty percent of the cost of acquiring and developing land for open space purposes can be matched by Federal funds. Land acquired for this purpose may be predominantly developed if acquisition is necessary to provide open space areas where a critical shortage exists. Listed in the following table are major Federal aid programs which may be utilized for recreation and open space purposes.

Community Action Programs	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965	Office of Economic Opportunity	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
Open Space Land	Housing Act of 1961	Office of Urban Habitat Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Housing Act of 1961



TABLE 10

## MAJOR FEDERAL AID PROGRAMS

## UTILIZED FOR RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PURPOSES

Program Title	Authorizing Legislation	Administering Agency	Program Description
Land & Water Conservation Fund	Land & Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965	Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Dept. of the Interior	Grants are made to states and through them to local government, for planning, acquisition and develop- ment of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Grants are made to finance 50% of allowable project costs.
Neighborhood Facilities	Housing & Urban Develop- ment Act of 1965	Office of Urban Neighborhood Services, Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Grants are made to local governments to help finance neighborhood or community centers providing a variety of social services. Grants may cover up to 2/3 of project costs, or up to 3/4 in redevelopment areas.
Community Action Programs	Economic Opportunity Act of 1964	Office of Economic Opportunity	Through the Community Action Programs, grants are made for public or private non- profit anti-poverty projects. Outdoor recreation projects are included as eligible programs. Grants cover 50% of program costs.
Open Space Land	Housing Act of 1961	Office of Urban Neighborhood Services, Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Grants are made to state and local governments for the acquisition of land for permanent open-space use. Basic improvements on the land also qualify for grants. Matching funds are available for both acquisition and improvements.





TABLE 10 (Continued)

## MAJOR FEDERAL AID PROGRAMS

## UTILIZED FOR RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PURPOSES

Program Title	Authorizing Legislation	Administering Agency	Program Description
Legacy of Parks		U. S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Grants are made to local governments for the acquisition of land for the development of recreational facilities. Local governments can obtain 50-50 matching funds for new parks, playgrounds and open spaces and up to 75% for sites that guide urban development.
Model Neighborhoods	Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966	Model Cities Administration, Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Grants are made to local governments to plan, develop and carry out comprehensive programs for rebuilding or restoring slum and blighted areas through coordinated use of all available federal programs and private and local resources. Grants cover 80% of the cost of planning, developing and administering programs and up to 80% of non-federal contributions required under federally assisted project.
Urban Beautification	Housing Act of 1961	Office of Urban Neighborhood Services, Dept. of Housing and Urban Development	Grants up to 50% are made to state and local government to help beautify publicly owned land in accordance with an over-all beautification program.





## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Two types of recreation areas are needed to serve the residents of the City of Bessemer City: a) park land for the preservation of unique open space and for relatively passive forms of recreation.
2. The need for park land for preservation of open space and for passive forms of recreation can be met through a system of resource-oriented parks.
3. National Recreation and Park Association Standards can serve as an aid in recreational planning, but should not dictate community recreation development totally. Community needs and desires must play an eminent role in planning.
4. Presently, there are no land deficits in Bessemer City, but officials should continue study of proposed sites for expansion.
5. A priority list should be compiled in order to determine the direction of the recreational program for the City of Bessemer City.
6. Local government funding should be sustained to match other sources of funds as the opportunity arises, and in conformity with adopted priorities.
7. Natural resources with unique recreational value should be identified, and conserved.
8. Using community needs as the basis, development of a recreational program with all individuals of the community in mind,



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

should be the ultimate goal.





## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

Pursuant to the requirements of and guidelines established by the National Environmental Policy Act, the Council on Environmental Quality, the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the North Carolina Environmental Policy Act, the following is a summary of environmental considerations regarding the recommendations and conclusions in this document.

### ABSTRACT

The document analyzes the environmental and recreational characteristics of designated recreational land in the City of Bessemer City. The most desirable arrangement for future recreational land uses are based upon the foregoing and an analysis of present recreational activities and potentials. Recreation development policies, and National Parks and Recreation Association Standards are presented. This Recreational Analysis covers a twenty-three year planning period.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The conclusions and recommendations, if implemented, should have some localized, short-term negative effects, but overall should have a long-term beneficial effect on the environment, and recreational development for the City of Bessemer City.

### ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Some localized, short-term effects resulting primarily from construction of facilities.





## ALTERNATIVES

The alternative to this growth and recreational development strategy is uncontrolled growth and development.

## RELATIONSHIP of SHORT-TERM to LONG-TERM EFFECTS on the ENVIRONMENT

The conclusions and recommendations in this document, which identify both short-term and long-term recreational needs, are intended to present courses of action whose environmental consequences will be in harmony with the longer-range recommendations.

## MITIGATION MEASURES to MINIMIZE IMPACT

Specific measures cannot be determined until this document is endorsed and implementation begins.

## IRREVERSIBLE COMMITMENTS of RESOURCES

Specific irreversible commitments cannot be determined until this document is endorsed and implementation begins.

## FEDERAL, STATE, and LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS

All existing federal, state and local government controls are applicable.

## HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

There are no historic sites so designated by appropriate state or federal authorities within the City of Bessemer City adversely



affected due to this study. There are no sites within the planning area of Bessemer City presently being considered for preservation based on their historical value, and no candidates for such preservation have been proposed for such preservation by federal, state or local authorities adversely affected due to this study.













